Text: Developing countries should engage in prior consultation with Earth over whether they should prioritize environmental protection over resource extraction.

It’s mutually exclusive. “Resolved” implies a firm determination, and if we were consulting we wouldn’t be firmly determined.

There is a gap between knowledge of environmental harm and educational responses to the crisis. The counter-plan solves because it bridges the mind, heart, body, and spirit divide in our academic discussions.

**Barrett 9** writes[[1]](#footnote-1)

**This** doctoral research **is a** deliberate **response to** what Berry & Tucker (2006) refer to as a “deep **cultural pathology**” **that** **enables** continuing **devastation of the planet** (p. 17). Poised at the cusp of what many call “the great turning” (e.g. Korten, 2006; Macy, 1998), **it** both **calls for and provides** beginning **tools to support the ‘shifts in consciousness’** long called for by those working in the environmental field. **It is a reconstructive text** in that it both engages and talks about a different form of consciousness many (e.g. Stirling, 2007) claim is **required to respond to the** ongoing and persistent **gap between what is known about** anthropogenic **environmental degradation, and** what appears to be the **limited effectiveness of educational** and other **responses to prompt significant** or lasting **change** (Stevenson, 2007a, 2007b). **This does not mean a rejection of Western scientific or rational** conceptual **knowing, but** rather **a creation of** more opportunities for both/and texts: research **texts which demand different forms of consciousness** from both 'writer' and 'reader,' and texts that enable 'reading' and researching **through an integrated mind, heart, body and spirit.** Paraphrasing the oft-cited quotation from Einstein, we cannot solve the human-created environmental and social problems with the same kind of thinking, (and I would add, consciousness, and knowledge-making processes) which created them. The dissertation emerged as an effect of my own de-colonizing journey as an academic working in the field of education where most conversations are based on assumptions of reality as material or discursively produced. **It** is also contextualized within continued and increasing **calls for different ways of thinking** (e.g. Stirling, 2007; Hart, 2005; Haraway, 2004a), **a different paradigm** (e.g. Capra, 1982), **and different languages** through which **to conceptualize and engage with the more-than-human** (Abram, 1996; Cole, 2002; Dunlop, 2002; Haraway, 2004b; Harvey, 2006a, 2006b). Yet to engage in such difference, as Harvey (2006b) suggests, may require “a reconfiguration of academic protocols" (p. 9). It may also involve a reconsideration of who we can be as individuals, and academics (see Dillard, 20006a, 2006b).

The aff’s current communication scholarship assumes the dominant narrative of reasons, further separating us from nature. The method of the counter-plan solves extinction.

**Plumwood 2** writes[[2]](#footnote-2)

The ecological crisis requires from us a new kind of culture because a major factor in its development has been the rationalist culture and the associated human/nature dualism characteristic of the west. Human/nature dualism, as I argued in Feminism and the Mastery of Nature , is a system of ideas that takes a radically separated reason to be the essential characteristic of humans and situates human life outside and above an inferiorised and manipulable nature. **Rationalism and human/nature dualism are linked through the narrative which maps** the supremacy of reason onto **human supremacy via** the **identification** of humanity **with** active mind and **reason and** of **non-humans with passive, tradeable bodies**. We should not mistake rationalism for reason – rather it is a cult of reason that elevates to extreme supremacy a particular narrow form of reason and correspondingly devalues the contrasted and reduced sphere of nature and embodiment. Feminist thinker Elizabeth Gross puts her finger on the basic denial mechanism involved in the irrationality of rationalist forms of reason when she writes that **the crisis of reason ‘is a consequence of the historical privileging of** the purely conceptual or **mental over the corporeal**; that is, it is a consequence of the inability of western knowledges to conceive their own processes of (material) production, processes that simultaneously rely on and disavow the role of the body’. 1 **The ecological crisis can be thought of as involving a centric** and self-enclosed **form of reason that** simultaneously relies on and **disavows its material base**, as ‘externality’, **and a similar failure of the rationalised world** it has **made to acknowledge and** to **adapt** itself adequately **to its larger ‘body’**, the material and ecological support base it draws on in the long-denied counter-sphere of ‘nature’. Rationalism and human/nature dualism have helped create ideals of culture and human identity that promote human distance from, control of and ruthlessness towards the sphere of nature as the Other, while minimising non-human claims to the earth and to elements of mind, reason and ethical consideration. Its monological logic leads to denials of dependency on the Other in the name of an hyperbolised autonomy, and to relationships that cannot be sustained in real world contexts of radical dependency on the Other. That the Other is an independent being on whom one is dependent is the child’s first and hardest lesson, even before the lesson that the nurturing Other must in turn be nurtured. It is a lesson that some children never properly learn, and neither do some cultures of denial. Rationalist culture has distorted many spheres of human life; its remaking is a major but essential cultural enterprise. **The old reason-centred culture** of the west which **has allowed the ecological crisis to deepen to the current dangerous point** may at one time have facilitated the dominant culture’s comparative advantage over and conquest of other more modest and ecologically-adapted cultures on this planet. This is speculation, but what is not speculation is that in an era when we are reaching the biophysical limits of the planet, this reason-centred culture has become a liability to survival. Its ‘success-making’ characteristics, including its ruthlessness in dealing with the sphere it counts as ‘nature’, have allowed it to dominate both non-human nature and other peoples and cultures. But these characteristics, and the resulting successes in commodifying the world (or producing ‘cargo’), are only too clearly related to our longer-term ecological and ethical failures. **We must change this culture or face extinction.** The ecological crisis we face then is both a crisis of the dominant culture and a crisis of reason, or rather, a crisis of the culture of reason or of what the dominant global culture has made of reason. Some might be tempted to suggest that reason is an experiment on the part of evolution, and that its hubris and inability to acknowledge its own dependency on the ecological order show that reason itself is ultimately a hazard to survival. But we would not need to deliver the sweeping and pessimistic judgement that reason itself is dysfunctional if we recognised reason as plural, and understood its political character as part of its social context**. It is not reason itself that is the problem**, I believe**, but** rather **arrogant and insensitive forms of it that have evolved in the framework of rationalism** and its dominant narrative of reason’s mastery of the opposing sphere of nature and disengagement from nature’s contaminating elements of emotion, attachment and embodiment. Increasingly **these forms of reason treat the material and ecological world as dispensable**. The revision of our concepts of rationality to make them more ecologically aware and accountable is one of the main themes of this book. Reason has been made a vehicle for domination and death; it can and must become a vehicle for liberation and life.

1. M.J. Barrett. Taking Representation Seriously: Epistemological and Ontological Congruence in Hypertexual Research/Representation. Beyond Human-Nautre-Spirit Boundaries: Research with Animate EARTH. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Val Plumwood. Environmental Culture: The Ecological crisis of reason. Routlege: New York. 2002. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)